

Musicfest Features Holiday Spirit

by Elaine Dufour

On Sunday afternoon, December 15, Schreiber's music department held its annual Holiday Concert. A good-sized audience attended the event at Schreiber to hear spirited holiday music.

The program consisted of performances by the Orchestra, the Concert Choir, the Varsity Choir, and the Concert Band. The musical selections included Christmas Carols and some non-religious songs.

The Orchestra began the afternoon concert with three pieces. The first, "Concertino for Two Trumpets and Strings" by Corelli, featured trumpet solos by Sue Coffee and Ken McIlhenny. This was followed by Handel's "Prelude and Fugue in D Minor" and "Polonaise" by Rimsky-Korsakov, from the opera, "Christmas Night."

Next, the Concert Choir, a small group of singers, joined the orchestra on stage in performing "Three Noels" by Clare Grundman. After the Orchestra had finished, the choir continued its performance of "Echo Song" by Benjamin Godard. The singers were accompanied by Lisa Bain's piano playing and Barbara Villan on the flute. The voices and the two instruments echoed each others' melodies, as suggested in the song's title. The choir's next piece, "Ad Cantus Laetitiae," a fourteenth century Christmas carol, was sung a cappella.

The highlights of the holiday program were the Varsity Choir and the Concert Band. The choir, conducted by Jerald Stone, performed three pieces: Bach's "Break Forth O Beauteous Heavenly Light", Handel's "Canticorum Jubilo", and Topil's "The Angel to the Sheperds", featuring a solo quintet by Karen Reiff, Alice Freyer, Grace Spatafora, Joe Caparella, and Brian Kent. Each piece was sung a cappella.

The choir's performance included the audience in its musical celebration of the Christmas holiday. The singers, lined up on stage and in the aisles on either side of the audience, sung out to each individual. Their voices reverberated through the auditorium and harmonized with one another.

The Concert Band, conducted by William Fish, performed three pieces, the first of which was "Czech Rhapsody" by Jaromir Weinberger. The popular "Carol of the Drum" (otherwise known as "The Little Drummer Boy") consisted of the steady beating of snare drums to the melody of trumpets and flutes.

The most interesting and colorful piece was "Danzon-Third Sailor's Dance" from "Fancy Free" by Leonard Bernstein. Its mood was fancy free; its style, modern. This

music resembled Bernstein's "West Side Story" in its similar jazz idiom. The beating of sticks, morucas, and zylophones contrasted with the tuba and flute playing. The piece came to a surprise ending which amused the audience. They applauded for an encore.

It has been a tradition in Schreiber's holiday concerts that

the encore be the "Christmas Festival Overture". Each year Mr. Fish calls from the audience former Schreiber band members to join in the performance. The overture was a potpourri of variations of familiar Christmas carols. The piece, which ended the program, received a good round of applause.



Photo by Kathy Hecht



Photo by Kathy Hecht

Mr. Fish comes on-stage to conduct Schreiber's Concert Band in the Winter Concert (above) and (below) Dr. Rusack leads the orchestra in Handel's "Prelude and Fugue in D Minor."